



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

<http://finance.senate.gov>

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Conflict diamonds legislation
Da: Friday, April 25, 2003

Today President Bush is expected to sign the bipartisan *Clean Diamond Trade Act* into law. The bill, passed by both the Senate and the House this month under the Senate leadership of Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, will help stop the trade of diamonds that fund violent civil conflicts in many African countries. The legislation will implement the United States' participation in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for trade in rough diamonds. The Kimberley plan is an international agreement establishing minimal acceptable international standards for national certification relating to cross-border trade in rough diamonds. It represents more than two years of negotiations among more than 50 countries, human rights advocacy groups, the diamond industry, and non-governmental organizations. The next plenary session of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is scheduled to convene in Johannesburg, South Africa, next week from Monday to Wednesday.

Sen. Grassley made the following comment on the President's expected signing of the *Clean Diamond Trade Act* into law.

"I appreciate the President's timely attention to this issue. The United States played a leadership role in crafting the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. It's important that we continue our leadership role. The trade of conflict diamonds is a serious problem. Funds from the sale of these diamonds add fuel to civil conflicts in several African countries and elsewhere. Millions of people end up suffering. These countries and their people deserve our support. Finishing this bill is the right thing to do. This is a trade issue, a consumer issue, and most of all, a human rights issue. Legitimate trade can elevate the standard of living for people all over. This bill sends a strong message that the benefits of trade in valuable natural resources like diamonds should accrue to the legitimate governments and their people in Africa."